

HOMETOWN SECURITY STUDY COMMITTEE

February 26, 2003, 1145 hours

Members Present: Chair General Stanley Heng, Carol Brown, Oscar Rios Pohirieth, Jim Geist, Don Marti, Jeff Fortenberry, Craig Madsen, Major Guy Moon, Annette McRoy, Ken Svoboda, Larry Hudkins, Doug Ahlberg, Julie Righter, Tom Casady, John Huff (representing Fire Department)

Not in Attendance: Bruce Dart, Mike Spadt

City Staff & Other Public Present: Jeff Cole (Staff), Corrie Kielty (Staff), Darrell Podany (Council Office), Mike Miriovsky (EMS Inc)

Approval of Minutes

Stanley Heng called for approval of the minutes of the January 31st and February 12th meetings. **Ken Svoboda moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Doug Ahlberg. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Mayor's Charge to the Committee

Because of uncertainty expressed at the last meeting regarding the scope of the Mayor's charge, (day-to-day public safety preparedness or response to acts of terror), General Heng met with the Mayor to clarify his charge to the committee. The Mayor reaffirmed that while we must be in a posture to interact with the international situation, he is more concerned with local safety issues. The two do intertwine, however, and resources would need to be redirected when there is a high probability of terrorist acts. Therefore the Hometown Security Committee should give some consideration to the international situation but not make it the primary focus.

Presentations

911 Center: Julie Righter stressed a couple of issues mentioned in her packet of information. The 911 Emergency Communications Center is a city agency that provides services to the county as well. The Center has existed since 1975 when it became a co-located facility. In 1979 the consolidated communications center was formed with 24 dispatchers. They now have 30. Understaffing which causes difficult work conditions is a major problem. There are a couple major impacts to the work of dispatchers: they are now trained to give CPR, Heimlich maneuver and child birth instructions, which can keep a dispatcher on one call for 10-15

minutes as opposed to a 30-50 second phone call in the past, and more people having cellular phones and several people are now reporting the same incident. All those calls have to be answered. The 911 Center has Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system but phones are still lamp and key. There is no way in the current budget to fund technology upgrades.

The most critical factors facing the 911 Center are staffing and technology. Carol Brown asked what the guidelines are for dispatching and how calls are prioritized. Julie responded that the CAD system is based on call type, and guidelines for response times were set by the Police Department and Sheriff's Department with input from the 911 Center. Craig Madsen asked Julie if she could provide a breakdown on what percentage of the calls they received were police related and what percentage were fire related. Julie indicated that information is available on the City's web page, the total number of law enforcement (Police and Sheriff) related calls where a unit is dispatched and total number of fire/medical related calls where a unit is dispatched. She added, however, that these statistics do not include every incoming call (i.e. redundant) because she does not have the ability to track that information.

Lincoln/Lancaster Emergency Management: Doug Ahlberg pointed out that Emergency Management is the focal point for additional funding and requests that impact the 911 Center, the Fire Department and the Police Department. Lincoln is 72 square miles, Lancaster County is 864 square miles. There are 17 volunteer fire departments that respond to calls for service in Lancaster County and beyond the county boundaries that are dispatched from the 911 Center. Lincoln is a focal point for requests and sends police officers and fire fighters as a response to natural disasters that have occurred statewide. In 2000, Lincoln was one of 120 cities selected to receive federal funding for domestic preparedness. That means that resources in the form of equipment are being funneled to the two major first responder agencies in the city (Police and Fire). Any time additional equipment is obtained, there is a drain on those departments' resources because of the required training. Every time funds become available that we can take advantage of, those departments affected, 911 Center, Lincoln Fire & Rescue and Police Department are required to pursue additional training out of existing budgets. Ahlberg felt we do a disservice by not upgrading the three initial response agencies to the levels they should be at.

Nebraska Military Department: Major Moon said the Nebraska

Military Department consists of three departments; the Army National Guard, the Air National Guard and Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), under the jurisdiction of the Adjutant General. In order for the National Guard to be utilized and to designate any resources, the Governor's Office has to declare a state of emergency. NEMA is the conduit for the dispatching of resources. The National Guard is a state entity that has to cover everything from the Colorado border to the Iowa border. Currently, 32% of the forces are mobilized. Because of the current national and international situation, the Major noted that statewide forces west of York have been depleted to almost nothing. There is a pretty strong force maintained within the eastern parts of the state but because NEMA is a state agency, those resources could be spread thin in the event of a statewide disaster which could cause problems for the local resources.

Service Levels/Suggestion from Craig Madsen

General Heng asked Craig Madsen to explain an approach to our task that he had outlined in an email. Craig felt that in order to be successful in this assignment, it is important to know where we are now and where we are going. There are a lot of motivations for driving the answer one way or another. He felt a way to begin is to ask each agency to identify the services they provide, what level of performance they should be providing, and where the standard came from. This will put information on a scale that is relevant to each agency. Then the committee can have an objective tool it can use to assess the agencies' needs.

Chief Casady said he can provide a document about what the police department thinks its expectations are, what the current level of resources are, and where those expectations came from. A lot of this information is already available and is a part of the department's goals which are updated from time to time. Community expectations, however, are situational and are not always clear.

Carol Brown asked Chief Casady to provide a work load analysis for officers. She also felt there were a lot of calls that police officers respond to that do not call for police response, and she wondered whether the police department ever reconsidered responding to those kinds of calls, for example unruly child at school. She felt the community should know what types of things are taking up so much of police officers' time and find out if that is what the community wants police officers to do. Chief Casady said there are a lot of things that police officers are called upon to do that are not critical to the department's mission and there are other agencies that ought to be much more capable of responding. One example is mental health investigations which take up several hours of an officer's time, or responding to requests from mental health hospitals/providers for assistance in handling a mentally ill person that they cannot

control. The Police Department is called upon because there isn't anyone else to call. Two types of incidents that the Police Department's command staff felt police officers were being sent to that were superfluous were barking dogs and medical emergencies. However, there is a community expectation that if they call the police, the police will come and do something productive.

Work Groups:

Don Marti felt it was important to get the Work Groups established so that they can begin their work and asked how the work groups will be identified. He also suggested that the Chiefs of the Departments involved be on the subcommittees, but not in a leadership role because it creates a perception of rubber stamping. General Heng said any committee member wishing to serve on a particular work group should let him know. In addition, committee members who have names of people with expertise that could or should serve on one of the subcommittees should submit those names to Jeff Cole by Friday (2-28-03) so that on Monday this information can be presented by the Mayor to the City Council. The size of the subcommittees will be left up to the Mayor's Office to decide. The recommendations from the Mayor and City Council of persons to sit on the work groups will be approved by the Hometown Security Committee at its next meeting. **Motion by Don Marti, seconded by Ken Svoboda to form four work groups; Police, Fire, 911 and Health/Emergency Management. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Location of Fire Stations

John Huff provided a map showing the locations of the current fire stations that was requested at the last meeting.

Next Meeting

Things to be done at the next meeting: approval of work groups.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 12th, 2003, 1145 to 1315 hours in the LPD Classroom.

Meeting adjourned at 1325 hours.

Submitted by:

Virginia Fischer